



FACT SHEET

Alaska Water Quality Criteria Manual for Toxic and Other Deleterious Organic and Inorganic Substances (Toxics Manual)

What is the Toxics Manual? Alaska's water quality criteria for toxic pollutants are contained in the *Alaska Water Quality Criteria Manual for Toxic and Other Deleterious Organic and Inorganic Substances* (often referred to as the "Toxics Manual"). These toxic criteria exist for protection of drinking water, aquatic life and human health. The Toxics Manual contains many numeric criteria for toxic substances, but many known toxic substances have no numeric criteria. For this reason, the Water Quality Standards (in 18 AAC 70) also includes narrative criteria for toxic substances to protect against the adverse effects of a vast array of substances whose toxicity is either unknown or insufficiently quantified to specify numeric criteria.

Why is DEC updating the Toxics Manual? The Department is required under the federal Clean Water Act, Section 303(c) to update its toxics criteria during each Triennial Review. These updates ensure that existing and new criteria reflect the most recent scientific studies and policy.

What will DEC be proposing? DEC will propose adoption of EPA's 2006 National Recommended Criteria for Toxic Pollutants and revised narrative criteria. However, DEC is postponing updates to human health criteria for fish consumption (Table V of the Toxics Manual) to allow for a more careful review of fish consumption rates in Alaska. DEC will also be proposing a change to the aluminum criteria for freshwater aquatic life and will be making a technical correction to the marine ammonia criteria.

Who is affected? Wastewater discharge permit holders, prospective wastewater discharge permit applicants and waterbody users.

What's next? If you have questions or comments about the potential changes to these regulations please see our website at

<http://www.state.ak.us/dec/water/wqsar/wqs/triennialreview> or contact

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